

TRIBUTE TO LOVEEDAH NADLER

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 13, 2003

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, it has come to my attention that a long and exceptionally distinguished career has come to an end. Mrs. Loveedah Nadler, of Lexington, Missouri, has retired from her position as Lafayette County Collector.

Mrs. Nadler, a graduate of Wellington High School, Wellington, MO, joined the County Collector's office on February 2, 1972, working for then-Lafayette County Collector George B. Gordon. However, Mr. Gordon passed away in June, 1974, leaving Mrs. Nadler to train his wife to fill the position until an upcoming election in November of that year. In that election, Warner Bounds was elected to the position and Mrs. Nadler stepped in once again and trained the newly elected official. During Mr. Bounds' third term in 1982, he was struck with health problems leaving Mrs. Nadler to assume many of the collector's responsibilities.

Mrs. Nadler ran for the office of Lafayette County Collector in 1986 and was elected in November of that year. She ran unopposed for reelection in 1990, 1994, and 1998. In her tenure working in the Office of County Collector, Mrs. Nadler blessed the office with her friendliness, ability, and willingness to work with people. Though her term officially ends on February 28, 2003, her dedication to the Lafayette County Collector's Office will be evident for years to come.

Mr. Speaker, Loveedah Nadler has dedicated 31 years of service to Lafayette County, serving with dedication. As Mrs. Nadler prepares to spend more time with her husband Kenny, her granddaughter, and the rest of her family, I know the Members of the House will join me in wishing her all the best in the days ahead.

ROSES THAT KILL

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 13, 2003

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call my colleagues attention to an article that appeared in the February 13, 2003 issue of the *The New York Times*. The article was written by Ginger Thompson and appeared under the headline "Behind Roses' Beauty, Poor and Ill Workers."

This St. Valentine's day, many of roses Americans will purchase as expressions of love for spouses, parents and others will have been produced in Ecuador. In a 20-year period, Ecuador has become the fourth-largest producer of roses in the world. The Andean Trade Preference Treaty of 1991 provides tariff-free access to American markets.

It, therefore, behooves us, both as Members of Congress and as consumers, to be aware of the conditions under which these roses are produced. As Ms. Thompson's article makes clear, there is reason for serious concern that workers, making as little as \$156 a month, are being poisoned as a result of the misuse of pesticides, fungicides, and fumigants. The

Ecuadorean rose industry employs 50,000 workers, 70 percent of whom are women.

I commend the following excerpt from the article to the attention of my colleagues and the public and urge you to read the entire article. In our efforts to express affection for a loved-one through the purchase of a flower, I am sure that none of us wants to be a part of the poisoning of another.

[From the *New York Times*, Feb. 13, 2002]

BEHIND THE BEAUTY, POOR AND ILL WORKERS
(By Ginger Thompson)

Cayambe, Ecuador, February 10—In just five years, Ecuadorean roses, as big and red as the human heart, have become the new status flower in the United States, thanks to the volcanic soil, perfect temperatures and abundant sunlight that help generate \$240 million a year and tens of thousands of jobs in this once-impoorished region north of Quito.

This St. Valentine's Day, hundreds of American florists and catalogs are offering the roses of this fertile valley. Calyx & Corolla, for instance, bills it as a place "where Andean mists and equatorial sun conspire to produce roses that quickly burst into extravagant bloom, then hold their glory long after lesser specimens have begun to droop."

But roses come with thorns, too. As Ecuador's colorful blooms radiate romance around the world, large growers here have been accused of misusing a toxic mixture of pesticides, fungicides and fumigants to grow and export unblemished pest-free flowers.

As in other industries like garment production, bananas and diamonds, the poor worry about eating first and labor conditions later. They toil here despite headaches and rashes here for the wealthier of the world, who in turn know little of the conditions in which their desires are met.

Doctors and scientists who have worked here say serious health problems have resulted for many of the industry's 50,000 workers, more than 70 percent of them women. Researchers say their work is hampered by lack of access to flower farms because of reluctant growers. But studies that the International Labor Organization published in 1999 and the Catholic University issued here last year showed that women in the industry had more miscarriages than average and that more than 60 percent of all workers suffered headaches, nausea, blurred vision or fatigue.

"No one can speak with conclusive facts in hand about the impact of this industry on the health of the workers, because we have not been able to do the necessary studies," said Dr. Bolivar Vera, a health specialist at the Health Environment and Development Foundation in Quito. "So the companies have been able to wash their hands of the matter."

Dr. César Paz-y-Miño, a geneticist at the Catholic University, said several pesticides used on a farm that was the setting for his research in the late 1990's were restricted as health hazards in other countries, including the United States, and labeled as highly toxic by the World Health Organization.

Among the most notorious are captan, aldicarb and fenamiphos. Dr. Paz-y-Miño refused to identify the flower farm under an agreement that he said he had with the owners.

He described the conditions as astonishing and recalled workers' fumigating in street clothes without protective equipment, pesticides stored in poorly sealed containers and fumes wafting over the workers' dining halls. When asked what government agencies monitor worker health and safety, Dr. Paz-y-Miño said, "There are no such checks."

Industry representatives denied that there was a health problem or that unacceptable risks were taken.

"The growers we know are very conscious of environmental issues," said Harrison Kennicott, the chief executive of Kennicott Brothers, a wholesaler in Chicago who is a former president of the Society of American Florists, a trade group.

"They go to lengths to get certified environmentally," Mr. Kennicott said. "The growers take care of the people. They provide housing and medical care."

"Our job is to satisfy our customers, who are the florists and retailers who deliver flowers to the public. Our interest is having the best quality product at a competitive price."

Yet it is hard to erase images of workers like Soledad, 32, and Petrona, 34, both mothers and both looking jaundiced and bony. In interviews after quitting time, they asked not to be fully identified out of fear that they would lose their \$156-a-month jobs cutting flowers in greenhouses. The women said they had elementary school educations but did not need high-level science to tell them why their kidneys throbbed at night and heads throbbed in the day.

"There is no respect for the fumigation rules," said Petrona, who has worked on flower farms for four years. "They spray the chemicals even while we are working."

"My hair has begun to fall out," she added, running a hand from the top of her visibly receding hairline down a single scruffy braid. "I am young, but I feel very old."

Soledad, who has worked on flower farms for 12 years, slowly turned her head from side to side.

"If I move my head any faster, I feel nauseous," she said, and then pulled up her sleeve to show her skeletal limbs. "I have no appetite."

When asked whether the farm where they worked had a doctor on duty, the women rolled their eyes.

"He always tells us there is nothing wrong with us and sends us back to work," Petrona said. "He works for the company. He does not help us."

TRIBUTE TO CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER MARK S. O'STEEN

HON. TERRY EVERETT

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 13, 2003

Mr. EVERETT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an American hero, Chief Warrant Officer Mark S. O'Steen, of Ozark, Alabama, in my congressional district. An Army Special Forces helicopter pilot, he recently gave his life in service to our nation during Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan.

On January 30, while piloting a training mission flight in an MH-60 Black Hawk helicopter, Mark O'Steen and three of his comrades lost their lives when their aircraft went down east of Bagram Air Force Base. Their sacrifices were not in vain.

Mark O'Steen was and remains an inspiration to all of us, living his life for God and country. Highly motivated and talented, he followed in the footsteps of his late father and older brothers in pursuing a military career.

An excellent athlete, linguist, military pilot, husband, father, and son, Mark O'Steen embodied the best of Alabama and our nation. He was proud of his work and did not let the ever-present risk inherent in military service worry him.

I join our Commander-in-Chief in offering the nation's gratitude for Mark's service and